



# PERMIT APPLICATION

Permit # 914 (Assigned by Department)

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries' Scenic Rivers program is authorized by LRS title 56, Chapter 9 Part II. This law requires permits authorizing activities in or affecting rivers that have been designated by the Louisiana Legislature as Natural and Scenic. Information provided on this form will be used in evaluating the application for a permit. Information in this application is made a matter of public record through issuance of a public notice. Disclosure of the information requested is voluntary, however, the data requested are necessary in order to communicate with the applicant and to evaluate the permit application. If necessary information is not provided, the permit application cannot be processed nor can a permit be issued.

## APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Applicant	NTS Communications, Inc.	Name of Agent (if any)	
Address	203 E. Thomas St.	Address	
Address		Address	
City, State, Zip	Hammond, LA 70401	City, State, Zip	
Phone	985-310-1032	Phone	

## DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTIVITY

Brief summary of the description and purpose of the proposed activity (details to be attached as a separate document)

Placement of underground fiber-optic cable to provide high-speed Internet, Video and Telephone services to rural communities in St. Helena Parish.

Is any portion of the activity complete? YES NO (If yes indicate month and year of completion)

## LOCATION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITY

Stream Name	Tickfaw River	Names, Addresses, Phone Numbers of Adjacent Property Owners
Parish	St. Helena	
Section	06	
Township	001S	
Range	004E	
Latitude/Longitude	30° 41' 09.38" N/ -90° 38' 37.09" W	

## ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Must be a separate document. See the attached instruction sheet for completing the assessment.

## CONFIRMATION OF INFORMATION ACCURACY

Application is hereby made for a Scenic River Use Permit to authorize the activities described herein. I certify that I am familiar with the information contained in this application, and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, such information is true, complete, and accurate. I further certify that I possess the authority to undertake the proposed activities, or I am acting as the duly authorized agent of the applicant.

Signature

10-29-14

Date



October 29, 2014

Mr. Chris Davis  
Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
Scenic Rivers Program  
P.O. Box 98000  
Baton Rouge, LA 70898-9000

Ref: Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers System Permit Application  
NTS Communications, Inc.  
Tickfaw River Crossing Project  
St. Helena Parish, Louisiana

Dear Mr. Davis:

Please accept this Scenic Rivers Permit Application. An original and six (6) copies are enclosed along with the \$100.00 administrative fee and signed legal agreement. Public notices are being initiated in the Baton Rouge Advocate and the St. Helena Echo. Confirmations of the required durations for these publications will be forwarded to you as soon as they are provided.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Respectfully,

Hunter McAllister  
Project Manager  
985-310-1032  
hunter@ntscom.com

## **Project Description & Location**

The proposed project involves crossing under the Tickfaw River along the North side of SR-43 in Montpelier, LA, as shown in Figure 1. Proposed work involves the use of directional bore rigs to place conduit underground, through which Fiber-Optic cable will be pulled. Figure 1 demonstrates the entry and exit points for the project, covering an approximate distance of 1,400’.

The path of the project is along approved DOTD right-of-way (ROW) which is cleared and maintained, so no clearing needs to be done for the project. Conduit will be placed at a minimum depth of 48” under DOTD ROW, and a minimum depth of 72” below the bottom of the river.

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1 – Overhead map of project area

Figure 2 – Overhead and cross-sectional rendering of project scope

Figure 3 – Picture of crossing site from East Bank

Figure 4 – West Levee

Figure 5 – East Levee

Figure 6 – Upriver shot from the East Bank

Figure 7 – Downriver shot from East Bank

## **Local, State and Federal Permits Required**

A permit request is in process with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the site, and all DOTD permits required for the area have been previously obtained.

## **Environmental Assessment**

- A. Existing Land Use- Land immediately adjacent to the Tickfaw River surrounding the project area is primarily unmanaged forest and shrub-scrub habitat. Existing ROW, inside which the project will take place, is mowed and maintained.
- B. Historical/Archaeological Sites- According to the National Register of Historic Places, there are no sites in the vicinity of the project area that will be affected. As well, an assessment of the projects scope and location was provided to the Office of Cultural

Development within the Department of Culture, Recreation & Tourism which determined that there are no archaeological sites that will be impacted by the project.

- C. Economic Impact- This project is being implemented by NTS Communications in partnership with the Department of Agriculture's Rural Utility Service Initiative, a program which facilitates the provision of cutting-edge digital services to rural communities across the United States. Tax revenues generated by jobs created in Engineering, Construction, Sales, Delivery and Maintenance, as well as Business and Individual subscribers to the services offered will boost revenue in local communities surrounding the project area.
- D. Wilderness/Rural Quality- There are no state or federally designated wilderness areas within or adjacent to the project site. As the ROW is cleared and maintained, no clearing of forest or vegetation will need to take place, and the site will recover to original condition upon completion of the project.
- E. Scenic/Aesthetic Value- There will be no adverse impact upon the scenic or aesthetic value of the Tickfaw River or surrounding areas within the work site. All areas will be restored to original conditions upon completion of the project.
- F. Recreational Use/Opportunities- The project will not result in adverse impacts to recreational uses or opportunities on the Tickfaw River in the project area.
- G. Ecological Systems Present- There will be no adverse impacts upon the vegetative and aquatic systems in the project area. No clearing needs to be done to disturb native flora, and placement of conduit underground will be at least 48" below the surface surrounding the river, and 72" below the river bottom.
- H. Fish & Wildlife in the Area- The Louisiana Natural Heritage Program was provided a detailed summary of the project in an attempt to enlist their assistance in identifying fish, wildlife and plant species within the project area, as well as any state or federal wildlife refuges or management areas that the project scope may encroach upon. Their findings were as follows:

"Our records indicate the fresh water mussel Elephant Ear (*Elliptio Crassidens*) occur within the study area. This species has an S3 state rank and is considered rare in Louisiana. Habitat protection is recommended for this species by avoiding disturbances such as water pollution, siltation and the construction of dams."

"...no other impacts to rare, threatened, or endangered species or critical habitats are anticipated for the proposed project. No other state or federal parks, wildlife refuges, scenic streams, or wildlife management areas are known at the specified site within Louisiana's boundaries."

Best practices will be observed to ensure disturbances do not occur that will threaten potential Elephant Ear beds in the area.

- I. Botanical Elements (Vegetation)- No disturbances to native flora will occur as a result of the project. As no clearing of vegetation will need to take place, no rare or threatened plant species are reported in the work area, and underground placement of conduit will occur under cleared ROW, well out of the range of native plant root systems, botanical ecosystems will remain as they were prior to construction.
- J. Geological Features- The surface geology at the project site comprises Pleistocene high terrace deposits consisting of tan to orange clay, silt and sand with large amounts of basal gravel (Geologic Map of Louisiana, 1984). There are expected to be minimal if any impacts upon geology or topography as a result of this project, as no clearing needs to take place, and any displacement of surface deposits will be minimal.
- K. Hydrological Features- There will be no temporary or lasting impacts upon the hydrological integrity of the Tickfaw River at the project site, as construction does not require entering the River, nor working within 450' of its banks.
- L. Water Quality/Quantity- As illustrated in Figure 1, the project entry point is at least 650' from the River's West bank, with the exit point at least 450' from the River's East bank. The path of conduit placement maintains a minimum depth of 6' below the bottom of the River as well. There are no expected impacts upon water quality at the site, the quantity of water present, or the flow of water through the site area.

### **Scenic Rivers Act Compliance**

NTS Communications, Inc. and their contractors have not been cited for any violations of the Scenic River Act.

### **Minimization Efforts**

NTS Communications, Inc. has designed the proposed project to minimize any potential environmental impacts. Entry and exit points for construction are well back from the banks of the river, as well as clear of the bordering levees, allowing for the prevention of any construction equipment or vehicles from coming within 450+ feet from river banks. This, combined with the project's required running depth will preserve the integrity of the aesthetic value of the work site, as well as prevent any equipment or apparatus to enter the river, thus eliminating any risk of river contamination. In addition, the project will operate within cleared ROW surrounding the site, eliminating the need for any clearing to take place.

## **Project Alternatives**

The only alternative method to the proposed project specifications would be to run the cable aerially along pole lines crossing the river. That option was declined by NTS because in the proposal of the overall project for the state of Louisiana to the U.S. Department of Agriculture it was agreed that it would be deemed an underground based project. That agreement was reached based upon the propensity for damaging storms to strike the state, often hindering or crippling communications systems. The underground placement of utility services leads to better, more consistent performance and dependability during adverse situations such as hurricanes. Aerial placement of lines can be susceptible to downing by high winds, trees, even traffic accidents. For all of those reasons, the proposed project specifications were chosen.



## State of Louisiana

BOBBY JINDAL  
GOVERNOR

DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE AND FISHERIES

ROBERT J. BARHAM  
SECRETARY

Dear Scenic River Permit Applicant:

Please review and concur on the following statement regarding the issuance of permits by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. This agreement must be signed and returned before a Scenic River Permit can be issued.

"I have been advised and do understand that by applying for and accepting a Scenic Rivers permit issued by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, I am being allowed to engage in an activity which would otherwise be prohibited by law or for which a permit is required. I understand that the permit is not a license and confers no property right upon me. I specifically agree to abide by all State and Federal fish and wildlife laws and regulations, and all State and Federal laws and regulations which relate to this permit or the permitted activity, and by all other terms and conditions of this permit. I understand that the permit for which I am applying may be suspended, annulled, withdrawn or revoked and that I may be assessed civil penalties, all in accordance with the provision of the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act, and that I may be denied future permits as a consequence of my failure to fully and completely comply with the terms and conditions of the permit, as well as other laws and regulations pertinent thereto. If served with or notified of a cease and desist order signed by the Scenic Rivers Administrator, I agree to immediately and without delay cease all activities and operations which relate to the permitted activity or which are impacting the Scenic River, until such time as the matter can be resolved in an adjudicatory hearing pursuant to the Louisiana Administrative Procedure Act. I understand and agree that any permit issued to me by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries is in the nature of a privilege which is being voluntarily extended to me by the Department and the failure on my part to cooperate with the Department can result in the loss of the privilege conferred and the denial of future requests for permits. By accepting this permit, I evidence my agreement to be bound by all conditions and stipulations set forth herein."

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "J. Barham", is written over a horizontal line.

Authorized Signature

10-29-14

Date

REV. 12/7/98

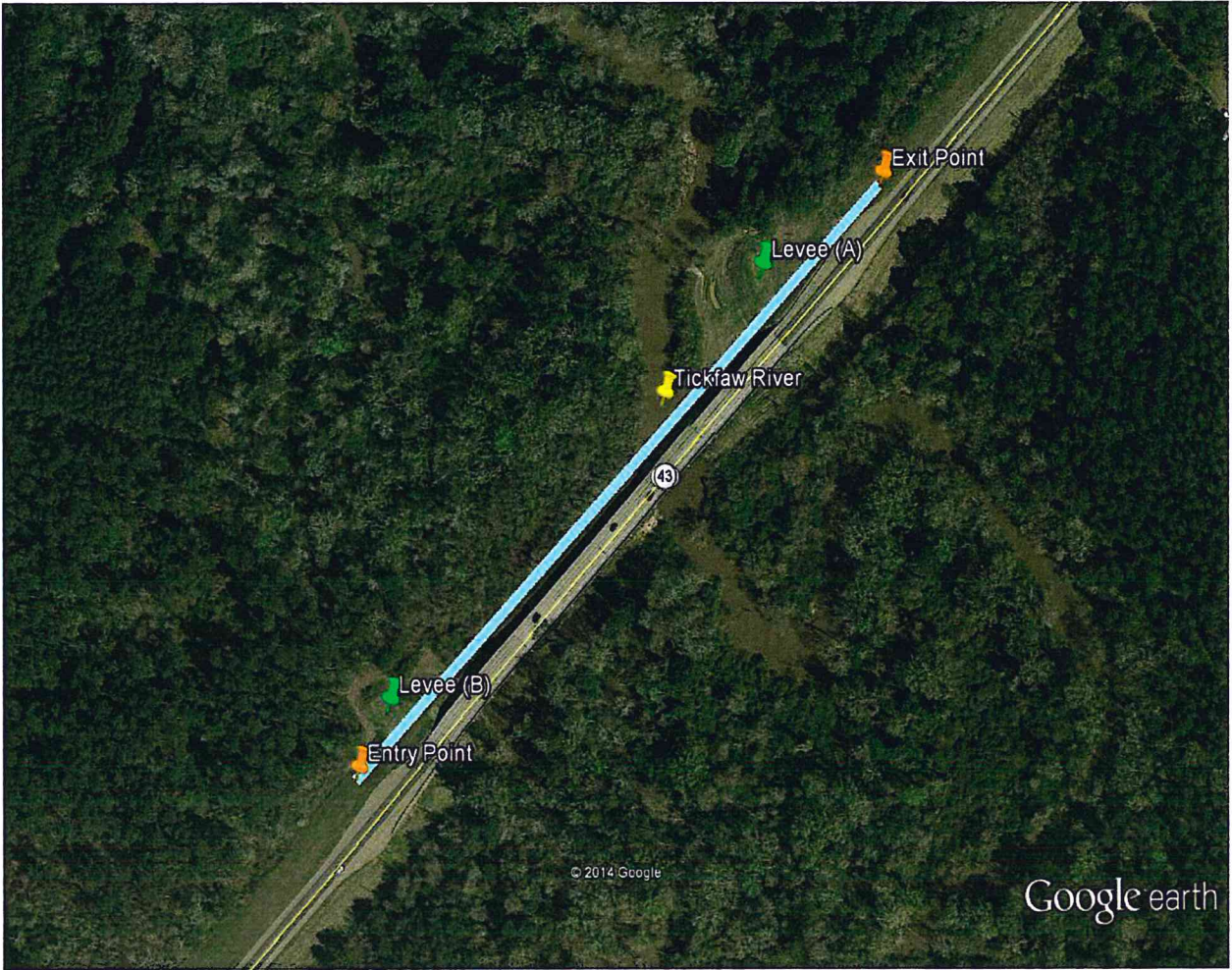
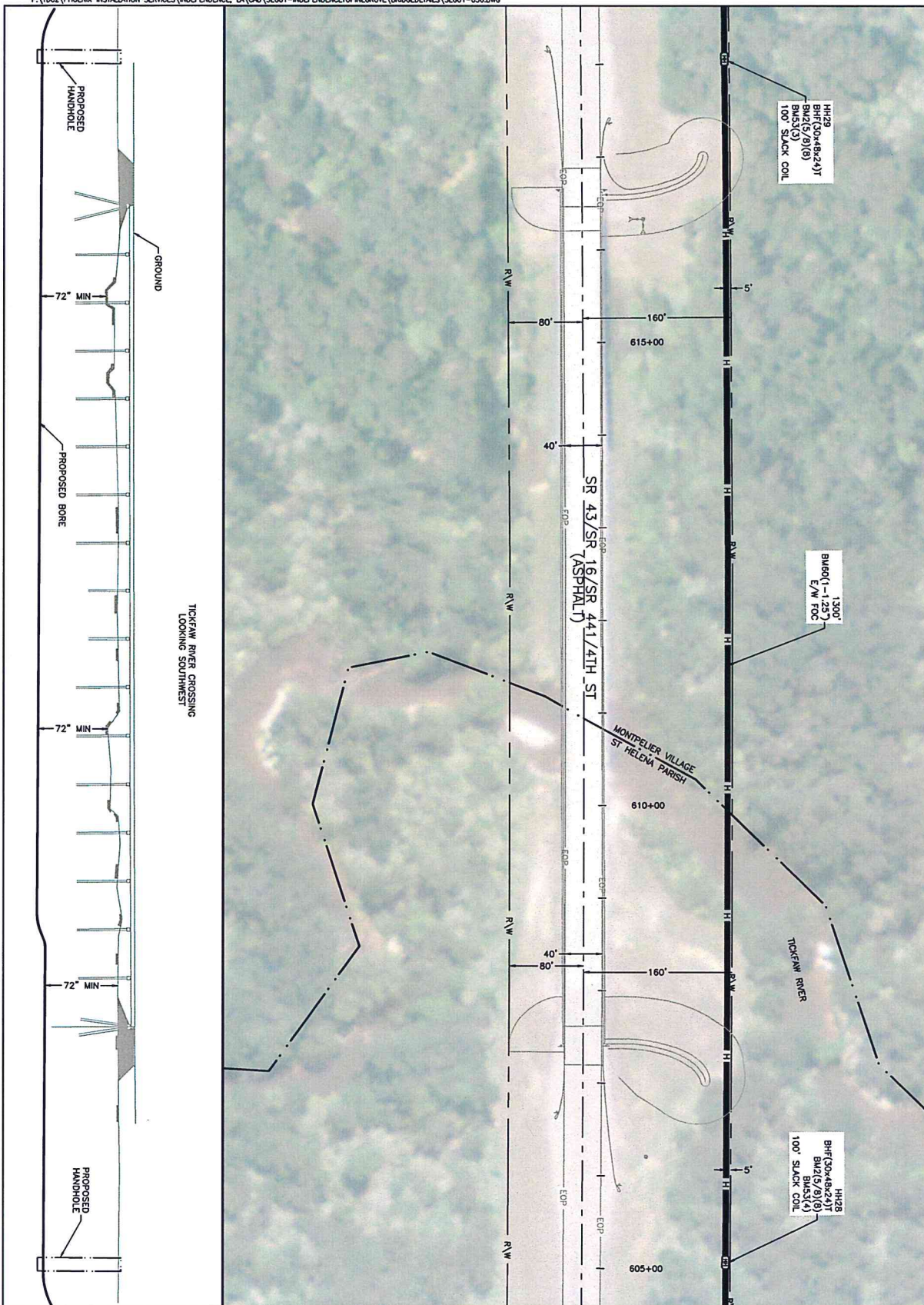


Figure 1



SHEET: 001 TOTAL SHEETS: 001	ROUTE: SEG01 PROJECT: INDEPENDENCE LOCATION: PINE GROVE TO MONTPELIER	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th>REV</th> <th>DATE</th> <th>DESCRIPTION</th> <th>ENG</th> <th>DRAFT</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> <td> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	ENG	DRAFT																																														<div style="text-align: center;"> </div> <p style="font-size: 8px; text-align: center;">THIS PRINT AND DESIGN ARE THE SOLE PROPERTY OF NTS AND SHALL BE CONSIDERED CONFIDENTIAL. THIS PRINT MAY NOT BE REPRODUCED IN ANY WAY WITHOUT THE WRITTEN CONSENT OF NTS, AND SHALL BE RETURNED UPON REQUEST.</p>
REV	DATE	DESCRIPTION	ENG	DRAFT																																																	



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



Figure 7